

REMARKS

This Amendment is responsive to the Office Action of February 16, 2006.

The Examiner objected to the drawings as not clearly showing the difference between the compressed and relaxed states of the compression springs and, also objected to the specification as not disclosing the compression spring ever being fully compressed. Applicant respectfully submits that the specification does disclose the compression springs compressed and that the drawings do, in fact, show the difference between the compressed and relaxed states thereof. For example, at page 18 of the specification starting with the second full paragraph, Figs. 6B and 6D are discussed wherein the compression springs are diagrammatically depicted as compressed. As described and shown in Fig. 6B, the pivot arm is in the unlocked position, however, the locking pins are stuck in their respective apertures 222. As a result thereof, the compression springs as shown are compressed and exert a direct bias on the locking pins. This is depicted in Fig. 6B by showing the compression springs in that Figure shorter in length as compared to Fig. 6A whereat the same compression springs are shown longer in length because the pivot arm is in the locked position and the compression springs are in their relaxed state. Similarly, as also discussed in the specification starting at the second full paragraph of page 18, in Fig. 6D, with the pivot arm in the unlocked position, the locking pin 178 (left side of drawing) is stuck in its respective aperture 222 while the locking pin 200 (right side of the drawing) is not stuck and has moved inwardly out of engagement with its corresponding aperture 222. As shown in Fig. 6D, because locking pin 178 is stuck, its corresponding compression spring 172 is depicted shorter in length than compression spring 194 acting on locking pin 200 which has already been retracted. Accordingly, applicant submits that the drawings do clearly show the difference between the compressed and relaxed states of the compression springs and that the specification does disclose the compression springs being compressed. Should the examiner require further clarification, he is invited to telephone the undersigned and/or suggest means for further clarification.

By this Amendment, applicant has amended Claims 9, 10, 16, 17, 26 and 27 and has canceled Claims 28-31. Claims 9, 10, 16, 17, 26 and 27 were amended as suggested by the

examiner so as to more particularly point out and distinctly claim applicant's invention. In this regard Claims 9, 16 and 26 were amended so as to call for the second spring to exert a direct bias on the locking pin when the pivot arm is in the unlocked position. Claims 10, 17 and 27 were amended so as to call for the first spring to exert a bias on the locking pin during both the locked and unlocked positions, and for the second spring to exert a direct bias on the locking pin when the pivot arm is in the unlocked position. Accordingly, applicant submits that all of the pending claims now meet the requirements of 35 USC §112.

Pending Claims 1-5 and 7-27 currently stand rejected as being obvious and unpatentable over Hutchens '946 in view of Drager '833, and Claim 6 stands rejected as being obvious and unpatentable over Hutchens '946 in view of Drager '833 and, further, in view of Baxter '578. In this regard, the examiner acknowledges that Hutchens does not disclose compression springs between the pivot arm and the locking pins and for this shortcoming cites Drager which discloses a compression spring similar to that of applicant's preferred embodiment. Although applicant would agree that compression springs of this character are known, it is respectfully submitted that neither Hutchens nor Drager teach, suggest, or otherwise provide any motivation or reason for utilizing a compression spring between a locking pin and a pivot arm in a slider assembly as conceived and claimed by applicant.

Moreover, applicant's utilization of a spring between the pivot arm and locking pins provides a slider mechanism which operates substantially different from that of Hutchens '946. In this regard, if any of the Hutchens '946 locking pins are stuck in their extended/locked positions, such locked pin prevents rotation of the crank 86 thereby preventing the placement thereof in an unlocked position. Unlike Hutchens '946, applicant's compression springs between the locking pins and pivot arm allow rotation of the pivot arm from the locked to the unlocked positions regardless of any of the locking pins being stuck in their respective apertures. This condition is, for example, depicted Fig. 6B and the left-hand locking pin shown in Fig. 6D whereat the locking pins are stuck but the pivot arm has been placed in the unlocked position and the compression springs are compressed and are exerting a direct inwardly bias on the locking

Application No.: 10/715,865
Reply to Office Action of: February 16, 2006

pins. As described starting at page 18, second paragraph, the operator may then "jostle" the vehicle to free the locked pins such that the force of the compression springs overcomes the force of the extension springs and causing the locking pins to be pulled out of the respective apertures.

As indicated in the MPEP Section 2144.04 VI(c), page 2100-147, citing *Ex parte Chicago Rawhide*:

"The mere fact that a worker in the art could rearrange the parts of the reference device to meet the terms of the claims on appeal is not by itself sufficient to support a finding of obviousness. The prior art must provide a motivation or reason for the worker in the art, without the benefit of appellant's specification, to make the necessary changes in the reference device." *Ex parte Chicago Rawhide Mfg. Co.*, 223 USPQ 351, 353 (Bd. Pat. App. & Inter. 1984).

Applicant respectfully submits that neither Hutchens nor Drager mention, let alone suggest or otherwise provide a motivation or reason for utilizing a compression spring between the pivot arm and the locking pin and achieving the operational benefits of applicant's slider mechanism as discussed herein above and more fully described in applicant's specification. Accordingly, applicant submits that all of the pending claims are not rendered obvious and are patentable over the cited prior art references.

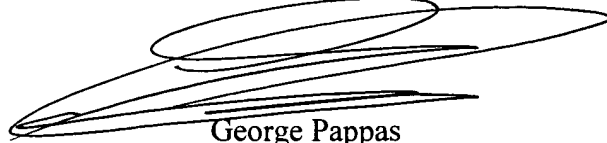
For the reasons set forth above, the allowance of the pending claims is respectfully requested.

In the event Applicant has overlooked the need for any extension of time or payment of fee, Applicant hereby petitions therefor and authorizes that any charges be made to Deposit Account No. 16-0248, Pappas Law Offices. Should the Examiner have any further questions regarding any of the foregoing, the Examiner is respectfully invited to telephone the undersigned at (260) 426-2340.

Application No.: 10/715,865
Reply to Office Action of: February 16, 2006

Applicant respectfully requests that a Notice of Allowance be issued in this application.

Respectfully submitted,



George Pappas
Registration No. 32,287
Attorney for Applicant

Date: June 16, 2006

GP:jf

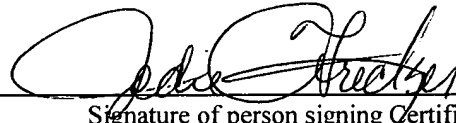
Pappas Law Offices
919 South Harrison St., Suite 300
Fort Wayne, IN 46802
Telephone: 260-426-2340
Facsimile: 260-426-2223

Enclosures:
Acknowledgment postcard
Petition and Fee

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING UNDER 37 CFR 1.8

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited
with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage
as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to:
Honorable Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450,

on: June 16, 2006



Signature of person signing Certificate

Jodie Frecker

Typed or printed name of person signing Certificate